

# TIME AND TIDE



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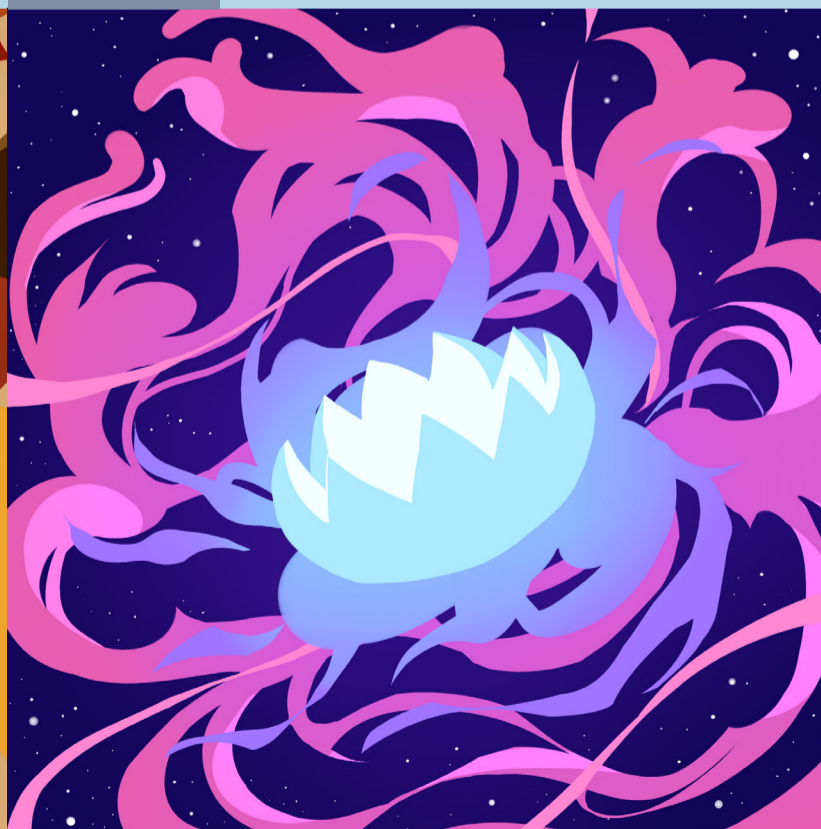
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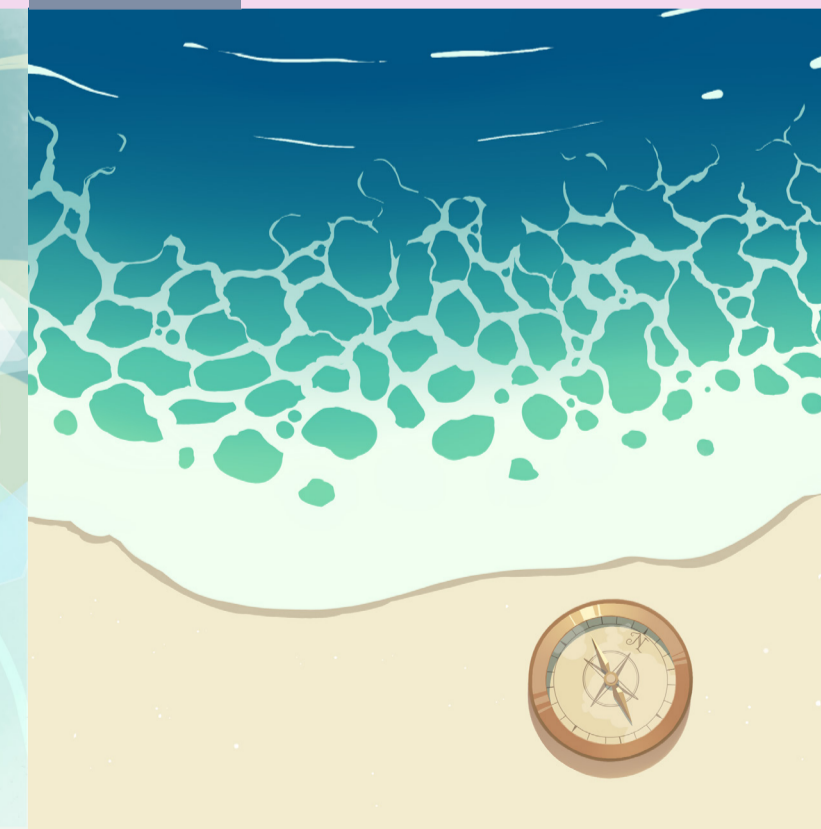
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# TRACKS

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## ADDITIONAL COMPOSITION AND PRODUCTION

**SerialSymphony** • [Bandcamp](#) • [SoundCloud](#)

## PRODUCTION ADVICE

**Splitsuns** • [SoundCloud](#)

## PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

**Alfonse Chiu**

**Loo Yan Perng**

**Yvonne Ban**

**SerialSymphony**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## QUOTES

**Track 10. The World as We Know It** quotes [Homestuck Anthem](#)

by **Clark Powell** • [Bandcamp](#)

## SPECIAL THANKS

**Roxanne Heikens** • [INHOSPITABLE](#) • [Twitter](#)

**Austinado and Sparaze** • [Vast Error](#)

**Helena Ruth** • [Website](#)

**Handshake Collaborations** • [Tumblr](#)

for granting me permission to feature music created in  
conjunction with their projects

and to everyone who supported me throughout the process of producing this album.  
This is for you!

# FOREWORD

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## TO THE PERSON READING THIS,

Thank you for listening to *Time and Tide*! (If you've somehow come upon this booklet by itself, [here's a link to the album.](#))

Here's what I was up to when I wasn't responding to your Discord messages or toiling away at my freelance work.

I've been putting out yearly music compilations for several years now, and this album is my slightly-late 2017 comp. You can expect a plethora of styles: synthpop, orchestral, jazz, and combinations of the above.

I'm glad I've been able to put this together, even with my life taking new turns, and new obligations emerging constantly. Music is a comforting spot of familiarity amid all the change.

To everyone who helped and supported me throughout the production of this album, whether by helping me or simply by encouraging me—Skip, Veri, Asprg, Kim, Yanperng, Yvonne, Alfonse, Hej, Waff, OP, Njike, the rest of the Root Crew, Split, Jo, Roxe, Poize, Austin, Poe, my parents, and everyone else who was there for me in some way—my biggest thank you!

Circlejourney

# TIME AND TIDE

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# TIMEKEEPER



I have always believed that *Frost and Clockwork*, an earlier track of mine, was a good concept wasted on sub-par production. For that reason, I've made numerous variations on that concept ever since. *Timekeeper*, with its tongue-in-cheek former title *Ice Horologue*, is perhaps the most fully-realised variation

It features the "Never Gonna Give You Up progression" that I've become mildly infamous for overusing. That progression represents a very particular mood to me, shaped by Vanessa Carlton's *A Thousand Miles* rather than Rick Astley's classic. (Prepare to find out over the course of this booklet just how big of a fan I am of mainstream pop.)

The character in the illustration to the left is the first of a few track gijinka that I've designed for this album. They're some sort of deity whom I refer to as the Timekeeper, a being in charge of keeping the inner mechanisms of time well-oiled and running.

## SPECIAL THANKS

[Splitsuns](#) for production feedback on this track!

# ZEITGEIST

I had a lot of fun making *Zeitgeist*, possibly more than I did on any other track on this album. The bassline is inspired by (and indeed the creation of the whole track was precipitated by) the chorus of Boney M's *Rasputin*. There you go, now you'll never be able to unhear it.

To me, the track evokes the feel of a decade past, although I can't pinpoint which one that is. It has that funky bass, a twenty-piece string ensemble, an erhu, white noise effects, bitcrushing, goodness knows what's going on in here.

As a play on both track and title ("zeitgeist" literally translates to "time ghost"), the art features a clock and a hoverboard surfer straight out of *Back To The Future*. Probably a second-rate professional time-traveller.

Nighttime cityscapes are a favourite subject of mine, and here I thought it would really fit the feel of the track: metropolitan, up-tempo, and retrofuturistic.





# COSMIC SIGNIFICANCE

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I wear my Celtic Woman influence on my sleeve. The solo violin on harp/string ensemble gradually joined by drums, the frequent borrowing from Dorian mode...yeah, that's Celtic Woman-style, alright.

To understand what the track is really about, you have to read Austinado and Sparaze's comic, *Vast Error*. It's good, I highly recommend it. In summary, this track is about the players of the game looking on at their universe-changing destiny, which has existed eons longer than they have, and wondering how they will contend with it.

Who's that in the art, then? To avoid unintentional copyright infringement, I decided to make it a drawing of me.

## CREDITS

This track was also released on [Vast Error Vol. 3](#).

[Vast Error](#) is a webcomic by Austinado and Sparaze.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Austinado and Sparaze for creating *Vast Error*, and for granting me the permission to include a track inspired by it on this album.



# THE PALACE GREENHOUSE

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This track is a bit of an outlier: it's almost purely a string ensemble piece with concessions to a bass drum and a snare, making it more exception than norm on this album composed largely of synth orchestrals.

A tie-in to my novel *Eagles and Swans* (which most listeners haven't read, I wager), it's a track about a garden within the greenhouse of the palace complex, where one of the main characters likes to read on weekends. It's stately, calm, and gives way to an interlude with a solo violin melody that, in my opinion, is the highlight of the track.

All in all, this is probably the closest thing to a filler track on this album, just something connecting two parts of the album together. The next track is more interesting, I guarantee you.





# SIDECAR SWING

This one's got a bit of a story to it. I initially meant for *Sidecar Swing* to be a short, simple experiment with a 20s jazz-style piece, the sort you might hear playing at a party or in a saloon.

The instant I had that imagery in my head, I started to picture mini-stories to accompany it, surrounding a speakeasy where people go to live the lives they may not live anywhere else.

Pictured in the track illustration is a pair of characters from one of the ideas I had while pondering the setting: a couple of flappers who regularly meet at the speakeasy, romancing each other and parting only when the sun comes up.

## LYRICS

Here's what I say, make away, I'll chase you through the mazes  
Say what you may, today we're going places  
Won't you stay? I'm crazy for you, baby  
Is today not simply the gayest?

Make away, I'll chase you through the mazes  
Say what you may, today we're going places  
Won't you stay? I'm crazy for you, baby  
Is today not simply the gayest?

# CHARIOT

Speaking of Celtic-inspired new age music...

*Chariot* is about the sun. The title references the god Helios, and the track itself is a riff on the structure and style of *Reel Around the Sun*, one of my favourite works of music, with a spacey touch introduced by the glitching.

The art was initially created not for *Chariot*, but for a different track that was meant to be on this album, but which I am unable to release. I think the subject matters are similar enough that the image still fits. (I like making music about space, surprise surprise.)

For those to whom this makes sense: *Chariot* is technically in the D-sharp Aeolian dominant scale, but I like to think of it as being in D-sharp minor with the tonic triad always being borrowed from D-sharp major.

## CREDITS

This track will be featured on an upcoming charity album by [Handshake Collaborations](#), with extended commentary. Handshake Collaborations is a group of artists, musicians and writers from around the world creating stuff together!

## SPECIAL THANKS

[Helena Ruth](#) and the people at [Handshake Collaborations](#) for agreeing to let me feature this on *Time and Tide* before their album's release.





# EVENING SONG

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*Evening Song* is the only track on this album composed for the art rather than the other way around.

Inspired by the intro of *Tender* by Yvette Young, it was an experiment in a style that had so far eluded me, with a solo melody on top of guitar broken chords, completely devoid of drums.

Ultimately, I still gave in to the temptation of sticking drums into the track, towards the end.

The guitarist in the art is the imaginary guitarist of the track. If I'd had the idea sooner, I would have added some aural indication that the piece is being played at the seaside, as shown in the image.

# PICK A CITY

This was me noodling with the synths in FL Studio, trying to make something as sweet and bubblegummy as the shade of pink in the illustration.

I couldn't pretend it wasn't inspired by Carly Rae Jepsen if I tried. The title itself is based on a lyric from her song *Picture*. I can't say what specific genre it's reminiscent of, but it was a sincere attempt to make something that would sound vaguely at home on a J-pop playlist.

There's a bit going on here synth-wise: it was the first time I'd tried making a more complex strum pattern, which you can hear in the last third of the track. There's also a generous helping of sound effects: bicycle bells, the crows synth (one of my favourites), and the water drop effect for example.

## SPECIAL THANKS

[Splitsunz](#) for the invaluable production feedback on this track, and helping me iron out some modulations!





# EMPTINESS

This track was part of a music compilation for *INHOSPITABLE*, a comic by my friend Roxe. It's a image-rich, dialogue-light story, and you'll come to notice the eerie greyscale static and the silence that characterise a great part of the webcomic.

Something about TV static inspires in me a sense of intrigue, about what's hiding behind it, what message, garbled by interference from space, is struggling to take form and make itself seen. *Emptiness* is about all that, the lost information, the void, the spaces and silence.

The character? Once again a representation of the music, gazing down upon a black hole as it guzzles light and information.

## NOTES

This track was also released on *INHOSPITABLE Volume 1: Consciousness*.

*INHOSPITABLE* is a webcomic by [Roxanne Heikens](#).

## SPECIAL THANKS

Roxe for creating the beautiful webcomic *INHOSPITABLE*, and for allowing me to include this track on the album.



# THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

*The World as We Know It* was initially made for an earlier project, but when that fell through, I repurposed it for this one.

This track is a wistful contemplation of the earth—temporary, fragile, full of vivid sensory experiences, but ultimately lonely.

Would intelligent life from elsewhere know the beauty of the sunset? Would they even be able to perceive it, or fathom beauty at all? The notion must be confronted, then, that we may be the only beings who will ever experience what we call beauty.

This track's *gijinka* character is inspired by a cherry blossom petal, everyone's favourite symbol of life's transience.

## NOTES

This track quotes *Homestuck Anthem* by [Clark Powell](#), released on *Homestuck Vol. 5*.

*Homestuck* is a webcomic by Andrew Hussie.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Clark Powell for granting me permission to include the track on this album.



# FROSTED GLASS

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Another track from the same abandoned project that *The World as We Know It* was meant to be released on, *Frosted Glass* quotes two of my old tracks: *Frost and Clockwork* (again) and *Hyalomancy*. The title is a combination of the titles of both. I always thought the two were oddly compatible, and this piece bears that out.

Just like the previous track, *Frosted Glass* is nostalgic in both style and content, sort of an account of gazing through broken windows into a blurry past with a distinct sense of loss for what one left behind there.

It's inspired, as a lot of my work is, by the works of Joe Hisaishi, legendary composer of the soundtracks of such films as *Spirited Away* and *Princess Mononoke*. His work formed the soundtrack of much of my childhood and was one of several things that inspired my love for the major pentatonic scale.

It was incredibly satisfying to draw and adjust blending modes on the glass shards in the image, which form a half-mask over the face.

# SHIPWRECK

Here is the obligatory sea-themed track on this album!

Moving on is a common theme in songs, and I thought this made *Shipwreck* particularly fitting as a closer.

This was written about confronting the departure of someone who used to be an anchoring force in your life. I did have two particular people in mind when I wrote the lyrics, but the specifics of that don't quite matter.

The vocals, being mine, are far from what I'd like them to be (and in all honesty it's still difficult for me to share my singing voice), but I hope you like it nevertheless!

## NOTES

Additional composition and production by [SerialSymphony](#).

## SPECIAL THANKS

SerialSymphony for your tireless help, support and enthusiasm for my projects. <3





# SHIPWRECK

## LYRICS

Letters, whose words I can't quite make out anymore  
In the dust, the outline of what stood there before, and softly  
Memories gathering at my feet like leaves on the floor  
And I know it all too well

### CHORUS 1

It is too late to say I knew I would regret not coming through  
Wasted chances, traded glances, threatening to mean something half-true  
Gathering the shards I do find that I hope you miss me too  
But I'm learning to stop yearning, I'm better burning every last trace of you

Dark skies, I wake up and stare out the window  
Even ice eventually thaws to dew below the sun and  
Reveries sprout out all young and green, forgetting the snow  
But the chill remains in the air, waiting to kill all that dared to grow

### CHORUS 2

It is too late to say I knew I would regret not coming through  
Wasted chances, traded glances, threatening to mean something half-true  
Gathering the shards I do find that I hope you miss me too  
But I'm learning to stop yearning, I'm better burning every last trace of

You were my beacon through the night, calling me homeward with your light  
In the tempest, I was reckless, and I let your glow slip out of sight  
And I know it's lost despite all my attempts to set it right  
It's all caving in, no use saving it, let it slip away in the whitewash tide

# SHIPWRECK

You'll never know  
Just turn and go

Oh, the sunlight from above will fade these marks away  
All you love, and don't love, will wash away

### CHORUS 2

It is too late to say I knew I would regret not coming through  
Wasted chances, traded glances, threatening to mean something half-true  
Gathering the shards I do find that I hope you miss me too  
But I'm learning to stop yearning, I'm better burning every last trace of

You were my beacon through the night, calling me homeward with your light  
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It's all caving in, no use saving it, let it slip away in the whitewash tide

Oh, the sunlight from above will fade these marks away  
All you love and don't love will wash away

# BONUS TRACKS

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Generally speaking, all the bonus tracks were originally intended to be featured on the main album. But things change, and sometimes you make enough decent tracks to displace this many to the bonus section. Think of it as a side B or a collection of album rejects.

## ALL THINGS GROW TOWARDS THE SUN

Originally the album's opener, I ultimately set it aside as I made new tracks that were similar in style but exceeded it in quality. Several people have mentioned that it sounds like something from *Undertale*; personally I just see it as yet another variation on the *Frost and Clockwork* theme (F&C was also referred to by many as being reminiscent of the *Undertale* soundtrack, so that's no surprise).

## DIRTY DIRGE

This one was made for no rhyme or reason; the melody came to me, and I liked it and built the rest of the track around it. Brash and very hard-rock, I didn't feel like I could do it justice until I got my hands on some better instruments. It was almost a year before I took it the draft and finished it up. Later on, I decided to make it a song played by a band formed of a few of my characters.

# BONUS TRACKS

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## WATERSIDE SUNSET

A rearrangement of an [old piece of music](#) under the same title, found on my album *Coastal Dreaming*. I was always fond of the melody and instrumentation on that piece and it was the first thing I tried remaking after upgrading my instruments. The track sounds a lot closer to what I envisioned now, though I miss the in-your-face timbre of the original instruments.

## WINEGLASSES

A soft lounge jazz piece that's just missing the sound of clinking glasses over it. Its original title was *Wineglasses on Red Stone*, conjuring a very specific image (or at least intended to) of a table made of blood-red stone. I made the whole thing on a whim and it materialised in barely an hour; I'm not letting it on the main album by virtue of how little effort it took.